

## In Supporting a Survivor

### You May Experience Certain Feelings:

#### Impatience

- The survivor's dependence on you may feel overwhelming.
- Recovery can be a long, slow process that may take years. You may feel frustrated with the time it takes for the survivor to recover.

#### Guilt

- You may feel guilty that you did not prevent the assault/abuse. It is neither your fault, nor the survivor's fault. The perpetrator committed the crime--not you.
- If you were the perpetrator, get support for yourself. Take initiative to accept accountability for your actions. You may not be the best person to provide support the survivor.

#### Fear

- Your closeness to the survivor's experience may underline the vulnerability to violence that we are all subject to. You may feel vulnerable because you realize that it could happen to you.
- If you are the same sex as the perpetrator, you may fear that the survivor will associate you with the perpetrator.
- If you are a sexual partner, you may be afraid to have sex with the survivor.

#### Anger

- You may feel extremely angry at the perpetrator for harming someone you love. Feeling anger is normal and understandable. It is important to find ways of expressing and channeling that anger constructively.
- It is often easier to blame ourselves for bad things that happen to us than to admit that circumstances were beyond our control. Be careful not to direct anger toward yourself or the survivor. It was not your fault, and it was not the survivor's fault that the assault occurred.

It is important to realize that your feelings are natural and normal. Supporting a survivor can be challenging, try to accept your feelings and to get support for yourself.